See also: Geopolitics History. For there is another truth: to the extent that other cultures have failed to adopt at least major aspects of Western ways, they remain backward and impoverished.

And what were those ideas? Although Mr. Stark does also give them credit for transmitting the recipe for concrete. Obviously, a Roman
adaptation of Greek politics was the Republic, the idea of which lives on in America in particular. So it's not as if Rome itself was superfluous in the realm of ideas. But, considered this way, it's hard to share Edward Gibbon's regret for the passing of the Empire. It is much easier to credit Mr. Stark's thesis, that the modern dominance of the West is a function of the spread and development of Christianity and of the free will and theological reasoning that are uniquely a trait of Judeo-Christianity.

As he makes this case, the author overturns a series of clichés that plague How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph historical thinking. Besides How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph the idea that the Fall of Rome was a tragedy, he dispels the notion of a Dark Ages, charting the spread of Christianity, capitalism and the like throughout this period. And he takes on numerous other "received wisdoms. Ultimately, we are forced to consider the possibility that we should think of Rome as the capital city of Western Civilization essentially an Empire of Ideas rather than a political territory and that what has really happened over the centuries is that the capital city has shifted North and West, eventually arriving in England and thence in America.

From these capitals, subsequent improvements in communications have made Western ideas ever more universally dominant, to the point where the Internet can penetrate nearly every nation and society in the world.

This has had the effect of making nearly all of them Westernize—what after all is "globalization" but the acceptance of the Western ideas, procedures, arrangements and sensibilities that Mr. How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph calls Modernity?

Because of the Judeo-Christian conception of God as a rational creator. The scientific enterprise is absurd unless one believes that the universe functions on the basis of rational rules and that these rules can be discovered and understood by the human mind. The other great world religions dismiss the idea of a rational universe as absurd. Rather, they conceive of the universe as a supreme mystery, far too complex for human comprehension, an appropriate object for meditation but not for reason.

In contrast, the Judeo-Christian God is regarded as a rational creator who therefore created a lawful universe, and it is possible to discover these laws. Lacking this conception of God, the non-Western world had no basis for science. It should be noted, too, that the great stars of early science, such as Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler, and Blaise Pascal, were deeply religious men—Newton wrote far more theology than he did physics.

Half believe in angels. It was that almost nobody listened. His book on the Crusades takes on one of the biggest stories of all. Woods, Jr. Kulikovsky, Creation.

How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of Modernity by Rodney Stark

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Will include dust jacket if it originally came with one. Satisfaction is guaranteed with every order. Buy It Now. Add to cart. Nowhere else did science and democracy arise; nowhere else was slavery outlawed. Only Westerners invented chimneys, musical scores, telescopes, eyeglasses, pianos, electric lights, aspirin, and soap. The question is, Why?

Unfortunately, that question has become so politically incorrect that most scholars avoid it. But acclaimed author Rodney Stark provides the answers in this sweeping new look at Western civilization. At the same time, he reveals the woeful inadequacy of recent attempts to attribute the rise of the West to purely material causes—favorable climates, abundant natural resources, guns and steel.

How the West Won displays Rodney Stark's gifts for lively narrative history and making the latest scholarship accessible to all readers. This bold, insightful book will force you to rething How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph understanding of the West and the birth of modernity—and to recognize that Western civilization really has set itself apart from other cultures. Additional Product Features Dewey Edition. Praise for How the West Won "Fortunately, a few unapologetic defenders of Western civilization can still be found."

In How the West Won Rodney Stark details how and why the vital aspects of modernity—defined here as a combination of sensible economic arrangements, political freedoms and scientific knowledge—developed in the West rather than elsewhere.

Along the way he upsets one politically correct apple cart after another. Stark's book should have as wide an audience as possible. Stark sets out to critique, and, in some instances, demolish several widespread mythologies about the West's development. In making these points, Stark is happy to engage in the deeply politically incorrect exercise of comparing developments in the West to that of other civilizations.

Nearly every chapter of How the West Won breaks some widely held opinion. If you are looking for a lively, erudite history, you'll find How the West Won a splendid companion. In How the West Won Rodney Stark details how and why the vital aspects of modernity—defined here as a combination of sensible economic arrangements, political freedoms and scientific knowledge—developed in the West rather than elsewhere.
Highly recommended. The pace is swift, and the narrative thrilling. Sets the record straight. Stark is especially adept at challenging received ideas. Deftly researched. Show More Show Less. No ratings or reviews yet. No How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph or reviews yet.

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Professor Wozniak, despite his disdain for recently elected President Ronald Reagan, was a great professor who brought the subject to life with his lively lectures and superbly organized presentations. I attribute my life-long love of history to his teaching. During that semester, and in the years since, I have often wondered about why our modern industrial society originated in Western Europe, why despite early advances in civilization the Chinese or Muslim worlds never saw a flowering of science and technology, and why even today the societies that reject Western values are largely repressed, backward, and unpleasant.

Just recently in a Wall Street Journal editorial the story of how Poland, which embraced the West and the European Community after the fall of communism, has twice the economic growth and more prosperity than their neighbor to the east, Ukraine, which did not. Western civilization is the pinnacle of human existence on planet Earth to this point, and it is roundly vilified and condemned by the progressive movement, for reasons which are inexplicable to me.

In his book How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of Modernity Professor Rodney Stark outlines how the rise of the West was fueled and enabled by the rise of Christianity, and how the philosophical underpinnings of rationality and reason embraced by early theologians actually enabled the idea that progress was possible and gave birth to capitalism, democracy and the western way of war, which enabled the West to defend against and survive threats from militant Islam.

This book is divided into five parts. All signs of resistance were brutally crushed. Command economies began with the earliest empires and have lasted in many parts of the modern world—they still attract ardent advocates. But command economies neglect the most basic economic fact of life: All wealth derives from production.

Indeed, Stark makes the argument that the Church facilitated and drove growth and innovation, not stifled it. Also due to How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of Modernity of the time, armed clashes led to the development of advanced military techniques, tactics and weapons that stood Europe in good stead during the invasions of Europe from the Muslims after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

Innovations in agriculture led to increased food supplies, which in turn led to rapid population growth. Europeans learned how to harness the power of wind and water to allow for mills to grind flour, full wool, and other industries. The next chapter reviews the outburst of colonization and spread of European culture resulting from the Viking raids of the 8th century onward.

The history of the crusades, the spread of Christendom and the crusader kingdoms are all reviewed in some detail. As Stark writes: Of particular interest is the description of the development of the democratic cities on Italy and of capitalism. Stark defines capitalism as: The four chapters of Part Three cover the years and how the impact of climate change plague and the How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of knowledge transformed Europe in profound ways.

He also covers the rise of industry and trade and how Europeans, thanks to advances in maritime technology, branched out and began exploring the world. This change followed the Medieval Warm Period of to completely in the absence of carbon dioxide emissions, notably when the Vikings settled Greenland and Iceland. That all changed in the winter of when Londoners danced around fires on the frozen river Thames, which had never happened before or since.

The global cooling period also led to failed harvests and widespread famine. The colder weather also was responsible for more severe storms. The growing cold stranded the Viking settlers on Greenland, and with no forests they were unable to build or repair boats, with the result that they were wiped out. The second disaster struck when a ship How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph flea-infested rats docked in Sicily, bringing the Black Death to Europe.

The part I like best about these chapters is that Stark is honest in his recounting of the adverse consequences How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph Western colonialism, but he also strips away the modern lens through which much of it is viewed and misrepresented. He discusses the unfortunate circumstances through which slavery — long abolished in Europe — was introduced to the New World. He debunks some of the popular myths surrounding the evil practice and points out that it was black Africans who rounded up and sold other black Africans into slavery, and how the Catholic Church came out strongly against this practice and the slave trade in total.

In the next three chapters, the reader is led through a survey of the Spanish Empire and why it failed; the Lutheran Reformation and how this event replaced a repressive Catholic church with equally repressive reformed churches. The common thread running How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of all of these incidents is the overwhelming military superiority of the Western nations, and how this alone prevented the
Muslims from achieving the goal of a worldwide caliphate — in that era, anyway.

The lives and careers of leading scientists of the age — many still revered today, many How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph — are reviewed. Stark points out how the advances in science during this era occurred with the encouragement of the Catholic Church, not in spite of the church as popular belief would have it. In Part Fifth are three chapters that cover the industrial revolution which most scholars say started around liberty and prosperity, and globalization and colonialism and takes us to the current time.

The chapter on the Industrial Revolution covers the main advances in technology and motive power, and the advent of labor saving and productivity enhancing technologies that fueled a rise in prosperity never seen before in history. The final chapter of the book discusses how, with the rise of Western modernity in place it was spread around the world.

Again, Stark looks frankly at European and American colonialism and dispels some of the more politically correct myths surrounding this period in history today. While greed was sometimes a motivating factor, the desire to help people was also a part, particularly among Christian missionaries. Instead, technological aspects of modernity have been grafted onto non-Western cultural systems that still lack many of the basic political and moral aspects of Western civilization. In Arab societies many people own cell phones and drive automobiles, and the armies have an abundance of modern weapons…There are no Arab democracies.

Women have few rights, and religious intolerance is the rule…A substantial degree of individual freedom is inseparable from Western modernity, and this is still lacking in much of the non-Western world.

This book is very well written and referenced. There are extensive notes and an impressive bibliography. It is also pages long, so it takes a little time to read. I read the Kindle version and have marked it up extensively. Professor Stark is not an apologist for Western culture, in fact, he is an unabashed cheerleader. And why not? Western civilization has wrought the highest living standards yet seen on this planet, with impressive prosperity, long life spans, unprecedented degrees of equality for women and people who are outside the norm, and amazing technology and achievements.

Where Western civilization has had shortcomings or unpleasantness, Stark does bring those up, but he treats them fairly. Nobody, no culture is perfect, and he acknowledges this. I learned a lot from reading this book, particularly about the reasons WHY Western civilization has been so dominant over the last several hundred years. It also offered some insights into how to combat some of the progressive myths and propaganda surrounding our modern industrial society that I hope to put to good use in debating and presenting the libertarian point of view.

It is to the detriment of generations to come. Freedom to hope. Freedom to act. Freedom to invest. Grand Canal in Venice Of particular interest is the description of the development of the democratic cities on Italy and of capitalism. By Richard D.